

1. A teleconferencing method comprising the steps of:
 - capturing a plurality of images at a remote station with an imager, wherein said plurality of images are of different fields of view;
 - compressing said image data to provide compressed data;
 - receiving said compressed data at a teleconferencing station;
 - decompressing said compressed data to provide decompressed data; and
 - displaying said plurality of images on at least one screen at said teleconferencing station using said decompressed data.
2. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 1 wherein said method further comprises the step of:
 - decompressing said compressed data at said teleconferencing station prior to said displaying step.
3. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 1 wherein said method further comprises the step of:
 - capturing said plurality of images from a plurality of remote suites prior to said displaying step.
4. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 3 wherein said capturing step further comprises the steps of:
 - combining a first set of image data for a first image of at least one first person with a second set of image data corresponding to a second image of at least one second person to provide combined image data;
 - displaying a combined image corresponding to a said combined image data at said teleconferencing station; wherein said first and second persons are both located at one of said plurality of remote stations.

5. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 1 wherein said method further comprises the step of:

capturing said plurality of images at a single remote location.

6. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 1 wherein said method further comprises the step of:

displaying said plurality of images on a rear-projection screen at said teleconferencing station.

7. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 1 wherein said method further comprises the step of:

receiving image data corresponding to said composited plurality of images at said teleconferencing station at a rate of at least 1.544 megabytes per second.

8. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 1 wherein said method further comprises the steps of:

situating a plurality of subjects in said teleconferencing station to define a predetermined sensory setting.

9. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 8 wherein said plurality of subjects include furniture and said predetermined sensing setting defines a business or education setting.

10. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 1 wherein said method further comprises the step of:

selecting said imager to have an aspect ratio of about 494 x 700 pixels.

11. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 1 wherein said imager comprises a plurality of cameras, said method further comprises the step of:

capturing said plurality of images using said plurality of cameras, respectively.

12. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 1 wherein said method further comprises the step of:

situating said imager at substantially eye level.

13. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 11 wherein said method further comprises the step of:

situating said plurality of cameras at substantially eye level.

14. The teleconference method as recited in claim 11 wherein said plurality of images are captured through a plurality of openings in said at least one screen.

15. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 1, wherein said imager captures said plurality of images through at least one opening in said at least one screen.

16. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 1, wherein said imager comprises a CCD.

17. A teleconferencing method comprising the steps of:
capturing a plurality of images using an imager;
compressing data generated by said imager to provide compressed data;
transmitting said compressed data to a teleconferencing station;
enhancing said decompressed data to increase a resolution of said plurality of images to provide an enhanced plurality of images when they are displayed at said teleconferencing station; and
displaying said enhanced plurality of images on at least one screen at said teleconferencing station so that at least one participant at said teleconferencing station views said enhanced plurality of images comprising an image of at least one person who appears substantially life size.
18. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 17 wherein said method further comprises the step of:
decompressing said compressed data at said teleconferencing station prior to said displaying step.
19. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 17 wherein said method further comprises the step of:
capturing said plurality of images from a plurality of remote suites prior to said displaying step.
20. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 19 wherein said capturing step further comprises the steps of:
combining a first set of image data for a first image of at least one first person with a second set of image data corresponding to a second image of at least one second person to provide combined image data;
displaying a combined image corresponding to a said combined image data at said teleconferencing station; wherein said first and second persons are both located at one of said plurality of remote stations.

21. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 17 wherein said method further comprises the step of:

capturing said plurality of images at a single remote location.

22. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 17 wherein said method further comprises the step of:

displaying said plurality of images on a rear-projection screen at said teleconferencing station.

23. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 17 wherein said method further comprises the step of:

receiving image data corresponding to said composited plurality of images at said teleconferencing station at a rate of at least 1.544 megabytes per second.

24. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 17 wherein said method further comprises the steps of:

situating a plurality of subjects in said teleconferencing station to define a predetermined sensory setting.

25. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 24 wherein said plurality of subjects include furniture and said predetermined sensing setting defines a business or education setting.

26. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 17 wherein said method further comprises the step of:

selecting said imager to have an aspect ratio of about 494 x 700 pixels.

27. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 17 wherein said imager comprises a plurality of cameras, said method further comprises the step of:

capturing said plurality of images using said plurality of cameras, respectively.

28. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 27 wherein said method further comprises the step of:

situating said plurality of cameras at substantially eye level.

29. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 1 wherein said method further comprises the step of:

situating said imager at substantially eye level.

30. The teleconference method as recited in claim 17 wherein said plurality of images are captured through a plurality of images openings in said at least one screen.

31. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 22, wherein said imager captures said plurality of images through a plurality of images in the at least one screen.

32. The teleconferencing method as recited in claim 17, wherein said cameras comprises a CCD.

33. A conferencing system comprising:

an imager for capturing a plurality of images in a plurality of different fields of view, respectively, and for generating image data corresponding to said plurality of images, when said plurality of images are transmitted to and displayed at said conferencing station, a substantially full scale image of a plurality of persons located at a remote conferencing station is displayed at said conferencing station; and

a plurality of CODECs for compressing and decompressing image data transmitted between said conferencing station and said remote conferencing station; and

an image data enhancer for enhancing image data received at said conferencing station after the image data is decompressed and during said teleconference in order to enhance the resolution of the substantially full scale image displayed at said conferencing station.

34. The conferencing system as recited in claim 33 wherein said conferencing system comprises:

a CODEC for receiving remote image data corresponding to said substantially full scale image;

said CODEC being capable of accommodating bit streams of at least 1.544 megabytes per second.

35. The conferencing system as recited in claim 33 wherein said substantially full scale image comprises a resolution of at least 352 x 288 pixels.

36. The conferencing system as recited in claim 33 wherein said substantially full scale image comprises a resolution of at least 1280 x 1024 pixels.

37. The conferencing system as recited in claim 33 wherein said conferencing system further comprises:

an analog signal generator for receiving bit streams from said CODEC and for generating an analog signal corresponding to said substantially full scale image.

38. The conferencing system as recited in claim 33 wherein said system further comprises:

a projector coupled to said analog signal generating for projecting said substantially full scale image in response to said analog signal.

39. The conferencing system as recited in claim 33 wherein said system further comprises a rear projection screen;

said projector projecting said substantially full scale image onto said rear projection screen.

40. The conferencing system as recited in claim 33 wherein said conferencing station defines an education setting.

41. The conferencing system as recited in claim 33 wherein said conferencing station defines a business setting.

42. The teleconferencing system as recited in claim 33 wherein said plurality of images are captured at a single remote location.

43. The teleconferencing system as recited in claim 33 wherein said system further comprises a rear-projection screen at said teleconferencing station on which the plurality of images may be displayed.

44. The teleconferencing system as recited in claim 33 wherein said imager comprises a plurality of cameras, said plurality of images being captured using said plurality of cameras, respectively.

45. The teleconferencing system as recited in claim 33 wherein said imager is situated at substantially eye level.

46. The teleconferencing system as recited in claim 45 wherein said plurality of images are captured through a plurality of openings in said at least one screen.

47. The teleconferencing system as recited in claim 33, wherein said imager captures said plurality of images through a single opening in said at least one screen.

48. The teleconferencing system as recited in claim 33, wherein said imager comprises a CCD.